

INNOVATIVE LIP BALM DISPENSER GOES GLOBAL

ABOUT BALMSHOT. Wayne S. Forrey, BALMSHOT'S founder and product inventor, contracted lip cancer in 1983 due to his outdoor lifestyle and frequent sunburned lips. After successful lip reconstruction surgery, he began using lip balm every day. His dissatisfaction with industry standard lip balm dispensers prompted the invention of BALMSHOT, inspired by the 20 gauge shotgun shell Forrey was familiar with as a hunter. He noticed the shell was about the same size as a lip balm container but had a nice smooth brass base, and set to work tinkering in his garage to produce a much better lip balm dispenser system with a firmer twist base and tighter fitting cap. Unlike other lip balms, the BALMSHOT shotgun shell dispenser keeps the lip balm from twisting and creating a gooey mess in the cap. Forrey launched his company in Boise, Idaho, in 2010, creating five jobs as BALMSHOT grew in popularity.

THE CHALLENGE. Over the years, BALMSHOT developed product sales channels online through the company's website and Amazon, and obtained shelf space in a host of stores, including Walgreens, Cabela's, Big 5 Sporting Goods, and Bed Bath & Beyond. The company was also serving nine different retailers in western Canada and working on dual language packaging for the country's eastern province. However, BALMSHOT still lacked a process for researching and targeting the product's best export opportunities. Forrey had some ideas about where he wanted to export next, but needed some assistance. He reached out to Idaho TechHelp, part of the MEP National Network™, to participate in Idaho's ExporTech Program.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. ExporTech paired BALMSHOT with an Idaho District Export Council Coach and a Boise State University International Business Student who helped research export opportunities and create an export action plan. The ExporTech Program introduced Forrey to a host of export resources that he could draw on for cost effective help with global research, intelligence, and export mechanics. BALMSHOT participated in a trade show in Germany, giving Forrey insight into the European market. He realized the importance of producing an organic product to satisfy global customers. He also learned that Amazon was exploring a new model that would allow BALMSHOT to sell into European markets using the Fulfillment By Amazon (FBA) platform instead of a local distributor. After launching the new product and expanding its market reach, BALMSHOT achieved record sales. The company retained its staff and hired an additional employee to handle the increase in demand.

"Our work with TechHelp and the ExporTech program opened our eyes to some great resources and led us to hire a new person. We now know there are resources available to us that are just an email away."

-Wayne Forney, Owner, BALMSHOT

RESULTS



Achieved record sales in **2017**



Retained staff and hired **1** new employee



Gained a cost effective way to research new export markets



Developed an organic product for global markets



Identified new markets in Germany & Eastern Canada

CONTACT US



Boise State University
1910 University Drive
Boise, ID 83725-1656



(208)426-3767



www.techhelp.org

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